

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph on Page 19, line 24 of the application with the following amended paragraph:

As shown in Fig. 1, the flexible tube 13 is connected at one end to the ink introduction port 8 on the buffer tank 5 and at the other end to the connector 14 provided on a carriage base 19 on the carriage [[4]]. The flexible tube 13 forms part of the first ink path 34. Also, the flexible tube 15 is connected at one end to the outflow port 9 on the buffer tank 5 and at the other end to the connector 16 provided on the carriage base 19. The flexible tube 15 forms part of the second ink path 35. The buffer tank 5, the flexible tube 13, and the flexible tube 15 are covered and protected by the cover 17 mounted on the carriage [[4]].

Please replace the paragraph on Page 21, line 6 of the application with the following amended paragraph:

Both the ink cartridge 30 and the sub-tank 32 are separate from the head unit 1 and located in a stationary position away from the carriage [[4]]. The level of the ink in the sub-tank 32 is lower than that of the surface containing the ejection openings 2a on the ink jet head 2. Therefore, during recording operations with the circulation pump 36 turned off, there is negative pressure acting on the surface containing the ejection openings 2a.

Please replace the paragraph on Page 21, line 14 of the application with the following amended paragraph:

The carriage [[4]] is mounted with components that configure the ink path from the ink jet head to the connectors 14 and 16. Although not shown in the drawings, a mechanism is provided for moving the carriage [[cartridge 4]] to a recording position and a purge position. In the recording position, the ejection openings 2a of the ink jet head 2 confront the printing surface of the recording medium. In the purge position the ejection openings 2a confront a suction cap 37. Also, a purge device 41 includes the suction cap 37, a unit (not shown) for raising and lowering the suction cap 37, a suction pump 39, and a drain tank 40. The suction cap 37 is disposed in confrontation with the ink jet head when the ink jet head is in the purge position. The unit for raising and lowering the suction cap 37 is for bringing a rubber member 37a on the suction cap 37 into contact with the surface containing the ejection openings 2a of the ink jet head 2. The suction pump 39 is for sucking ink from the suction cap 37 to the drain tank 40 through a suction pipe 38 connected to the suction cap 37. During purge operations, the suction cap 37 is brought close to and connected to the surface containing the ejection openings 2a of the ink jet head 2 so as to cover the ejection nozzles, using a commonly-known actuation method. Then ink is drained to the drain tank 40 through the suction pipe 38 by the operation of the suction pump 39.